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ABSTRACT

A study examined what further education colleges in Britain were doing about security and what they planned for the future. A literature search found that a PEST (Political/legal, Economic, Sociocultural, and Technological) analysis was one way to examine the differential impact of external influences. A PEST analysis offered a strategy for security that considered college environment, strategic capability, organizational culture, and stakeholders' expectations. The research was undertaken to help Barking College in greater London plan an organizational strategy on security. Questionnaires were sent to 225 colleges in southeast England, Greater London, and Essex; the response was 50 percent. Focus was on client requirements, organizational requirements, and security measures. Less formal "opportunistic interview" sessions were used to discover staff concerns. All 109 colleges taking part said they had experienced theft. Other security breaches mentioned were internal fights, muggings, drug dealing, physical attacks, vandalism, arson, aggression, and a bomb scare. One-third of colleges had had staff physically attacked; one-half had had students attacked. Most medium-to-large colleges employed specialist security staff. Two of five colleges had some form of restricted access. Implications of findings were organized into three categories: those pertaining to premises, procedures, and training. (Appendixes contain 14 references, instruments, and a map of location of colleges responding to questionnaire.) (YLB)

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Security is not an option — learning in a safe environment

Beatrice Coe

Volume 1 Number 19

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Security is not an option — learning in a safe environment

Beatrice Coe

FE MATTERS

FEDA paper

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Beatrice Coe began her teaching career in comprehensive schools. She moved into further education in 1980. Her management experience includes being deputy head of department in an FE college and assistant director of a business and services faculty. In January 1995 she became head of client services at Barking College. This role involves working closely with the site manager and director of faculty responsible for estates, and responding to breaches of security which involve students. The research around which this paper is based was carried out for her MBA thesis.

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Security becomes a top priority

Recent tragedies such as the murder of innocent children and a teacher in Dunblane, the killing of a headteacher outside a London comprehensive school, and a machete attack on children in a nursery school in Wolverhampton have made security in UK educational institutions a key issue at a national level. At a local level, many further education colleges have experienced violence on campus causing increasing concern for students, staff, governors, college principals and the community.

The current situation has given security a high profile within the education sector. Allowing freedom of access to legitimate users while also ensuring that the institution's environment is a safe one is a critical balance to be achieved. However, with thefts and assaults becoming more commonplace inside the walls of education establishments, it is paramount that action takes place now to make learning environments safe as well as welcoming places for young people to be.

This paper reveals what further education colleges are doing about security at present and what is being planned for the future, via a questionnaire to college principals. It also takes a closer look at the types of incidents experienced and the views of students to establish whether they think it is possible to combine a welcoming, open-access environment with a secure place in which to work and study. These findings are used to offer recommendations for managers in FE.

The research was carried out to help a particular institution, Barking College, to plan an organisational strategy on security. However, what soon became evident was that the same security issues are prevalent in colleges of all types in all parts of the country, so the findings of this research are applicable to all within FE. The high response rate to the questionnaires, nearly 50 per cent, particularly considering the amount of paper work already facing principals, indicates the high interest in security within FE.

The recommendations for changes in the way security issues are handled at Barking College offer key messages to the sector as a whole.

Because research on security in further education is minimal, this paper will in part refer to the situation in education in general. However, the research undertaken will relate specifically to FE establishments.

Key findings

All 109 colleges taking part, except three which gave no response to this question, said they had experienced theft. The other types of security breaches mentioned were internal fights, muggings, drug dealing, physical attacks, vandalism, arson, aggression and a bomb scare.

Alarmingly, one-third of these colleges have had staff physically attacked and half have had students attacked. A large proportion of these attacks were carried out by people who had no reason to be on the premises.

This survey of colleges in the south east also revealed that most medium-to-large colleges, with predominantly full-time students, employ specialist security staff. Two out of five colleges have some form of restricted access, the most popular method being a swipe card system. A high proportion of those without restricted access are considering it for the future, and some have budgeted for imminent installation. The most popular method of security is an electronic system alongside a secondary system such as closed circuit television (CCTV).

The implications of the findings of this research can be organised into three categories: those pertaining to premises, procedures and training. Some recommendations have a cost attached, but a considerable number can be achieved for free, or only at a minimal cost.

The key recommendations for Barking college following this research include:

- reorganising the premises staff
- producing a feasibility report on restricting access

- providing:
  - —a staffed car park barrier
  - —security lighting
  - —swipe card entry system in two stages
  - —professional security guards trained by college staff
  - —a dedicated radio system
  - —panic alarms
- refining and upgrading CCTV cameras
- ensuring security procedures are implemented
- establishing a security action team to monitor procedures
- implementing training procedures and ensuring shared ownership with students.

The main indicators of success of any of these procedures are a reduction of incidents of injury or losses through criminal activities and the increased satisfaction of students and staff. However, it is important to be aware that improved monitoring and recording systems may mean that the number of recorded incidents initially increases until all measures are in place.

There will always be a conflict between liberty and security. It is the responsibility of further education staff to ensure that any measures taken are not counterbalanced by creating an environment of fear, excessive concern or hostility. The harshness of security can be masked with the right attitude from staff.

1. Security — key issues

Security is a nebulous and emotive concept. For one person it may be a busy metropolis with people all around providing safety in numbers. For another it may be the isolation of a deserted landscape with no-one to pose a danger to your well-being. Each of these concepts also conjures up images of other dangers which may take away the feeling of security.

A literature search under the heading 'security in education' brought up research projects which, almost without exception, were to do with 'job security'. This reveals the intriguing insight that only in the light of recent events in education establishments in Dunblane, London and Wolverhampton have educationists become aware that there but for the grace of a madman go each of our institutions.

Other literature searches on such key words as 'premises', 'security', 'safety', 'incidents in schools/colleges' produced more information on security of the computer mainframe and contingency plans for computer crashes than on security measures to protect staff.

The concise Oxford Dictionary offers a number of definitions of security ranging from 'documents as evidence of a loan, bond etc' to 'thing that guards or guarantees', giving further proof as to the confusion associated with the term. Since security in an education institution has much to do with the environment, this research uses the definition given by Fischer and Green:

> *security implies a stable, relatively predictable environment in which an individual or group may pursue its ends without disruption or harm and without fear of disturbance or injury.* (1992; page 3)

Johnson and Scholes (1993) point out the dangers of dealing with environmental influences in a piecemeal way, partly because of being unable to predict what might happen in the future. Who, for example, could have predicted the recent incidents in schools which have resulted in the deaths of many children and a headteacher?

Johnson and Scholes suggest that:

> *managers sensibly address themselves to considering the environment of the future, not just of the past. They may do this by intuitive means, or may employ more structured ways of making sense of the future, such as scenario planning. This involves identifying possible future changes significant to the organisation and building logically consistent alternative views of the future based on these.*

External influences

A PEST analysis (see Johnson and Scholes) is one way to examine the 'differential impact' of external influences, that is those which are:

- **P**olitical/legal
- **E**conomic
- **S**ocio-cultural
- **T**echnological

Political/legal influences

The machete attack on infant school children in Wolverhampton on 8 July 1996 led to pressure from unions and parents for the Government to use lottery money to make schools safer. However, the Department of National Heritage said that national lottery money was not intended to replace mainline government funding. Following the fatal attack on Philip Lawrence, the headteacher killed outside a London school on 8 December 1995, the Government has promised new money for schools from April 1997 (*Times Educational Supplement*, 19 July 1996, page 6). A Government working party was also established following this attack. This has since recommended that the Government:

- make guidance available to schools, police and other agencies on powers available to the police and criminal justice system to deal with trouble-makers in and around schools
- review whether there is a need for further strengthening of the law

- publish guidance on improving the security of schools and designing more protection into new buildings
- make substantial new money available
- support governors to help them to fulfil their security responsibilities
- offer teachers, support staff and governors appropriate training.

The governing body has ultimate responsibility and yet does not have the operational control to ensure the safety of those at the college. If this were a problem, it would be up to the chief executive to draw governors' attention to this issue. With the existing financial struggles of education institutions, any legislation imposed would need to be backed by government funds.

Economic influences

A growing tendency to resort to litigation means that cases similar to those taken out against hospitals could soon be issued against colleges. For example, a student who did not feel reasonable care had been taken to ensure his or her safety might sue the college for neglect.

The ever-increasing cost of theft is another major economic influence. During 1991, school vandalism and theft in England and Wales was reported to have cost more than £150 million (*Times Education Supplement*, 14 February 1992). This excludes administration costs, overtime payments, call-out charges, replacing stolen and damaged equipment and insurance premiums, not forgetting the human cost of disrupted and cancelled classes, lowering of morale and other non-financial costs. Again, no figures are available for colleges. Most insurance companies will not insure for walk-in thefts. They also impose heavy excess costs. Post-incorporation, it is the FE colleges who must bear these costs.

Shrinkage (theft by employees) is a delicate and unpleasant concept to deal with. It is also difficult to prove and takes time to be identified, since an employer would rather not believe that a trusted employee is a thief. A determined member of staff in a position of trust can inflict a great deal of damage before being discovered.

Socio-cultural

A recent article in the *Times Educational Supplement* (17 May 1996) suggested that knives, bats and chains are carried by almost one-third of 14–15-year-old boys and that almost one in fifty is armed with a gun. While this survey was of more than 11,000 pupils in a total of 64 secondary schools, the statistics are relevant here since a number of these young people will now be in FE colleges. None of the seven districts sampled — Cornwall, Cumbria, Devon, Essex, Northern West Lancashire, West Midlands and Teesside — correspond to known trouble spots. This makes the potential for violence and threat to safety implied by these results even more alarming.

As part of this research, 40 students (24 boys and 16 girls) were asked if they thought school was a safer place to be than college. Exactly 80 per cent said yes, with less than eight per cent saying they thought college was safer, and just over 12 per cent saying they thought they were equal in level of safety. If a third of 16-year-old boys carry weapons at school to feel safe and they generally feel college is a less safe environment, what does this say about the number of students in FE who may carry a weapon?

Technological influences

Improved communication links among teachers, card entry systems, limited points of access and CCTV are all means to use technology to increase security measures. The level at which colleges are investing or plan to invest in such measures is a focal point of this research. It also aims to reveal what students feel about the use of such security measures, for example, how much they see them as an invasion of privacy.

Approach for FE

In the light of recent events it is not enough to sit and hope that it is only minor theft which is carried out when intruders gain access to FE colleges. The number of hours an FE college must remain open makes it more vulnerable to

the dangers of open access than schools. Unfortunately, FE colleges are having to face up to the reality that no institution is immune from threats to the security of its environment. 'That kind of thing won't happen here' is not an attitude that anyone can afford to take: in the current environment complacency can allow catastrophe to strike. Table 1 gives just two examples of incidents reported by one member of staff in an FE college.

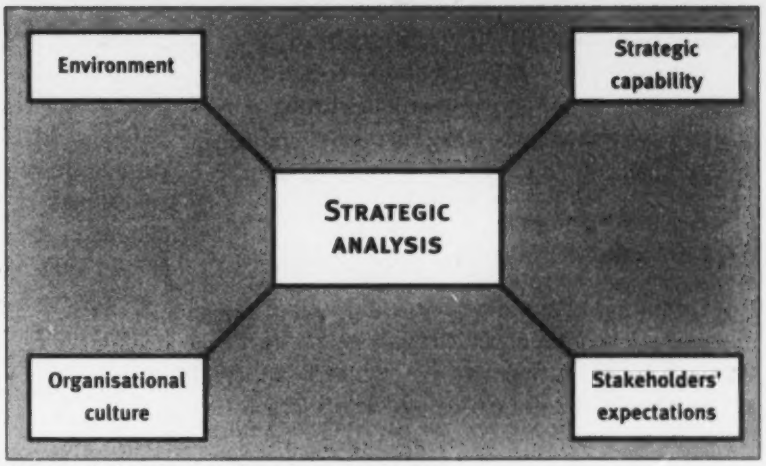

FIGURE 1: ASPECTS OF STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Public opinion is forcing the government to consider the issue of security within education establishments. As other colleges begin to respond to this issue and invest in tighter security measures, those who are trying to maintain an open access policy will become soft targets. Security is not an issue to ignore. However, it is also crucial that colleges don't have a knee-jerk reaction to all types of imaginary problems. Instead, they should identify actual problems and suggest possible solutions which work for their institution.

Fischer and Green (1992) note that security mirrors society and suggests that throughout history security emerges as:

> *a response to, and a reflection of, a changing society, mirroring not only its social structure but also its economic conditions, its perception of law and crime, and its morality. Thus security remains a field of both tradition and dramatic change.*

One conceptual framework that can be used to identify the influences which will affect the choice of strategy is that offered by Johnson and Scholes (1993). It recognises the complexity and variety of changes taking place in the external environment and society which have an impact on the organisation, and so outlines the opportunities and threats which must be considered in a strategic plan (see Figure 1).

Incident 1

A young man had been continually entering one of the sites of our FE college and harassing the female students. He was ejected on several occasions but it became more serious when a group of girls came to me in tears saying that this man was in a classroom and had a knife. I looked in the classroom and saw that he was trying to get out of the window, which I had asked the caretakers to lock as this was his normal escape route whenever he saw me. I asked the secretary to call the police and then entered the room and removed all students. I stood in front of the door, not allowing him to escape, until the police arrived. After the event I realised how serious this incident could have become for the students and myself.

Incident 2

When passing the college refectory I found a large group of young men kicking and punching one of our students. With the help of some students, I managed to free the victim and have him ushered into the refectory kitchen where he had to be locked in for his own safety. I was left with approximately 20 youths, all dressed the same like a small army, who had obviously come to settle a grievance. I had difficulty finding a telephone or to get anyone to call the police as many people had locked their offices and were out for a Christmas lunch. The police eventually arrived but for a considerable length of time many people were in danger.

TABLE 1: EXAMPLES OF INCIDENTS OF SECURITY BREACHES IN AN FE COLLEGE

College environment

Most FE colleges will tend to be influenced by three environments: the immediate vicinity, the larger environment covering the surrounding area, and society in general.

When planning a strategy on security, each of these environments must be considered.

After identifying the environmental influences on a college it is important to analyse the organisation's strategic position in relation to other geographically close institutions competing for the same customers.

Students need to feel safe in the college environment. They may also wish to be visited on campus by family, friends and so on. If a college has total open access and a neighbouring college does not, it may become the victim of increased theft or assaults. If students feel that one college offers more security than another they may go elsewhere.

The competitive climate in FE brought about by funding methodologies — units of resource, convergence, productivity improvements, results, retention, recruitment and so on — means that managers of other local colleges are often reluctant to collaborate. How much information they are willing to share regarding the sensitive issue of the security of their customers, staff and buildings is uncertain. This research included a survey of other colleges in the region of Barking College to find out how other institutions were dealing with the issue of security.

While recent events have raised awareness of the issue of violence in schools, with money pledged by the Government to tackle this problem, there has been no corresponding attention given to colleges. Because an FE college has students and staff arriving at various times of day and visitors and members of the public needing regular access to facilities, it is far more difficult to secure than a school. The FE sector deserves at least equal attention to the issue of security as that given to schools.

Strategic capability

A resource analysis should also be part of the process of developing a strategy on security. This should be approached from the point of view of the organisation's strategic capability, to concentrate on value activities and the linkages between activities rather than simply resources *per se*. Johnson and Scholes discuss ways in which it can contribute to the understanding of strategic capability.

Most colleges have evolved during the past three years making radical changes in many areas, but 'resource heritage' has meant they have stuck with existing systems; although some Management Information Systems (MIS) have gone through enforced metamorphosis to meet information requirements of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). There is a danger that weak communication systems inherited within large organisations may lead to speculation and exaggeration regarding events which have taken place on its premises.

In terms of security, which has traditionally received very little in the way of resources, a conventional audit would not suffice. Colleges must now consider the link that resources utilised for security have in all areas of college life: marketing, attendance, outcomes, client satisfaction, general atmosphere. Two years ago a murder took place on the threshold of a college eight miles away from Barking College. Any college experiencing one such event is lucky to survive; if any college experienced a spate of gang intrusions or injuries to students, the community would quickly acknowledge that college as a dangerous place to send young people, which would inevitably affect recruitment.

Organisational culture

There are many cultures within a college. This paper will focus on the concept of culture as it affects or contributes to the issue of security.

Williams, Dobson and Walters refer to culture as:

> *commonly held beliefs, attitudes and values.* (1993)

They emphasise a distinction between this definition and one which may imply shared beliefs, attitudes and values. They highlight that in a given situation people will think and behave similarly, adopting similar styles, rituals and ways of behaving, even though they have received no formal instruction and may come from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. They suggest that this common behaviour is derived from sharing their history, experience and environment.

Culture within an organisation is said to be self-perpetuating. Williams, Dobson and Walters state:

> *Beliefs and attitudes within an organisation are drawn initially from its external environment. The beliefs of individuals within the organisation determine their behaviour, which acts as a role model for others. When coupled with power, as in the case of senior executives, beliefs influence the internal environment of the organisation in a more formal way. This may be through the development of strategy, or through the design and implementation of the structures and systems of the organisation. If effective these reinforce existing beliefs and influence the beliefs of new members joining the organisation. In other words, beliefs influence the internal environment which in turn influences beliefs. If there is no new input from the external environment, this will result over time in stability.* (1993; p70)

This final sentence is particularly pertinent when considering the plight of the Dunblane primary school, since the tragedy there on 13 March 1996.

A college or school will wish to encourage a culture of mutual respect for each others' well-being among students and staff, but if an external force — a person with a gun/knife/drugs — infiltrates this stability then all normality could be considered suspended. Unless contingency plans are in operation serious consequences could result.

Egan, however, defines culture as:

> *the shared beliefs, values and norms of a company in so far as these drive shared patterns of behaviour.* (1994; p7)

He suggests that culture has a 'thinking side', that is shared beliefs, values and norms, and a 'doing side', that is the patterns of behaviour.

When dealing with a sensitive issue such as security it is unrealistic to suggest that all involved — staff and students — have a shared belief. With regard to a person's safety it is very likely true that there is a shared culture in wishing to work in a safe environment. However, the methods of imposing any restrictions or rules to guarantee a safe environment may not result in shared beliefs. Individuals or groups involved would be influenced by their own culture, and the cultural context of the organisation reflects the beliefs of those inside and outside the organisation.

Stakeholders' expectations

Stakeholders are groups or individuals with expectations or interests in an organisation, including students, staff, local employers, and the Government.

Priorities change as a result of the actions of various pressure groups and of events. For example, what happens in any college has an impact on the local community and visitors to the college. If a college has weak security systems which attract crime to the area, then the college has a responsibility to the local community to put suitable controlling systems in place. However, colleges cannot afford to wait until a crisis occurs or external stakeholders insist that something is done. Clients will vote with their feet and go to a college that seeks to ensure their safety, so it is in the interest of all colleges to be proactive regarding security.

Different cultures will have differing levels of tolerance towards uncertainty. Johnson and Scholes give two extreme stereotypes:

> *a culture where uncertainty is managed by attempting to reduce it; when organisations are seen as having control and being proactive; and where the hierarchy, the individual and the work tasks are stressed. Here strategies are likely to be planned. United States culture comes close to this stereotype.*

In contrast, the adaptive model of strategic management is more likely to be found in cultures where uncertainty is accepted as given; where the organisation has less control and is reactive; and where the orientation is towards the group and social concerns. Japanese culture is close to this stereotype. (1993; p159)

It could be argued that each is a valuable response to different issues at different times.

Although the expectations of each stakeholder may be different, the common theme will no doubt be a friendly environment with open access which has cost-effective measures to ensure the security of all stakeholders.

In particular, this research project will seek to establish what staff want and what they are prepared to do to support security measures.

Key points when developing a strategy on security

- External influences on a college should be analysed before any strategy on security is developed. These include political, economic, socio-cultural and technological influences. Looking at the environment of the future is as important as considering what has happened in the past. Any future changes which will impact on the organisation should be identified and accommodated in the resulting strategy.
- Recent events have increased government input on security in education: guidance on dealing with trouble-makers and on designing more protection into new buildings is expected shortly. While the focus is on security in schools, this guidance could also have something to offer to the FE sector, if adapted accordingly.
- The number of weapons in schools is startlingly high. Given that students consider FE colleges even less safe than schools, this has alarming implications for the situation in further education.
- When planning the introduction of new security measures, colleges need to look at the latest technological developments in this equipment. Before choices are made, they should consider the impact of specific measures on students' perceptions of the college environment.
- Auditing actual problems and identifying solutions that work for that specific college is vital: a knee-jerk response to all types of imaginary problems could be counter-productive.
- Colleges should consider the environment of the immediate vicinity, of the surrounding community and of society in general.
- They should carry out an audit of their resource stock in terms of how the equipment is used for specific organisational activities. They should consider how resources used for security will impact on different aspects of college life.
- The culture of an organisation can have a considerable influence on how security measures are perceived. Colleges should seek to ensure that their organisation's culture is one where security measures are not viewed in a hostile way. The right attitudes from staff can help to reduce negative perceptions of the security measures adopted.
- Colleges should consider the expectations of all its stakeholders: if the college's approach to security doesn't meet their needs, then clients will vote with their feet and transfer to a college which does.

2. Achieving security in an FE college: aims of this research

Barking College, the institution used as the focus of this research, is a medium-sized further education establishment in East London. It has 9,000 students and 290 staff on one site, which is approximately a quarter of a mile in length from front to back and houses 15 main buildings (see Appendix 1). The main block alone has five entrances, making restricted access difficult. Proposals are in place for a new building incorporating security features to replace some of the smaller buildings and to improve facilities in existing buildings. Within a ten mile radius of Barking College there are three other FE colleges competing for the same customers.

Approach taken by Barking College

Managers of Barking College pride themselves on maintaining an open, welcoming atmosphere which avoids barriers to the general public and potential customers making impromptu visits. However, this approach means that intruders also have access, and there have been times when they have come on to the premises. So far none of these incidents have led to any serious harm. However, this is no reason to be complacent. The college realised that it was time to put into place procedures which provide effective, not obstructive, measures for ensuring the security of all personnel and property.

Historically, any security issues at Barking College have been dealt with by the Security and Premises Manager; his original title was Premises Manager, when security issues formed a relatively minor part of his role. A growing number of incidents (mainly of theft) highlighted the need for more formalised security procedures and training. A number of incidents of gangs coming on to the premises to settle external arguments with certain students led the principal to issue a bulletin to all staff on security (see Appendix 2). The principal reluctantly decided that more stringent security measures were needed.

Investigating a new approach

After incorporation in 1993, when senior managers became responsible for all areas of college organisation, certain areas hitherto considered of low importance were catapulted to a prime position on the agenda. Security was one of these.

While it was clear that the college might not be able to maintain the open access it had enjoyed, it was considered equally important not to lose all aspects of accessibility. This research would investigate actions taken in other colleges to make use of the experiences of and solutions adopted by others.

Planning the research

Good research should include:

- descriptive research — giving a snapshot of present status
- explanatory research — asking why 'X' happens
- generalisation research — if techniques work with 'X', will they work with 'Y'?
- basic and theoretical research — to discover any underlying principles.

Since security is an obscure and complex topic a variety of investigative methods would be used. Two different questionnaires would be sent out, one to principals and security staff of colleges, the other to students. Interviews would be carried out to ascertain perceptions of safety within the college.

Historical research was almost non-existent; research on security relates to schools, and not the FE sector. The only literature that could be used was recent articles in journals or the national press, and these were often connected with the Dunblane or London killings or the attack in Wolverhampton.

The research would be limited to colleges in a reasonably-sized geographic area; too wide an area could lead to results skewed by environmental issues pertinent to specific regions. The

sample surveyed was a varied target population but small enough to restrict the research to acceptable perimeters. No attempt was made to reflect socio-economic, urban or size differences of colleges as a deciding factor of inclusion. The research would deal with facts (quantitative approach) when establishing the *status quo* and measuring the level of importance each college attaches to security. It would also take account of the psychological aspect regarding perceived versus actual danger (the qualitative angle).

Questionnaires were sent to 225 colleges in the south east of England, Greater London and Essex to achieve geographical and sociological variety. The response to this research (almost 50 per cent replied within the time limit) suggests there is sufficient interest to warrant a nation-wide survey, perhaps analysing the results geographically as well as socio-economically.

Collecting the data

The three parts to the research were:

- primary research:
  - —looking at other colleges
  - —looking at Barking College
  - —a questionnaire to principals in the south east to research opinion and gauge action taken or planned
- secondary research:
  - —reading on security issues
  - —researching statistics on assaults and thefts experienced in colleges
- empirical evidence:
  - —discussions with the principal
  - —discussions with the site manager
  - —documented evidence of incidents within the college
  - —watching student behaviour
  - —listening to staff concerns.

The three main areas on which the research would focus related to client requirements, organisational requirements and security measures (see Figure 2). Data would be collected on:

- areas of concern and priority in further education colleges regarding security
- projected future expenditur
- breaches of security experienced
- students' views on their personal safety, perceived and actual, and on whether they regard specific security measures as an intrusion into their college life
- the staff perspective.

The questionnaire would be used to collect the first three sets of data to give a snapshot image of current and projected trends and budgets,

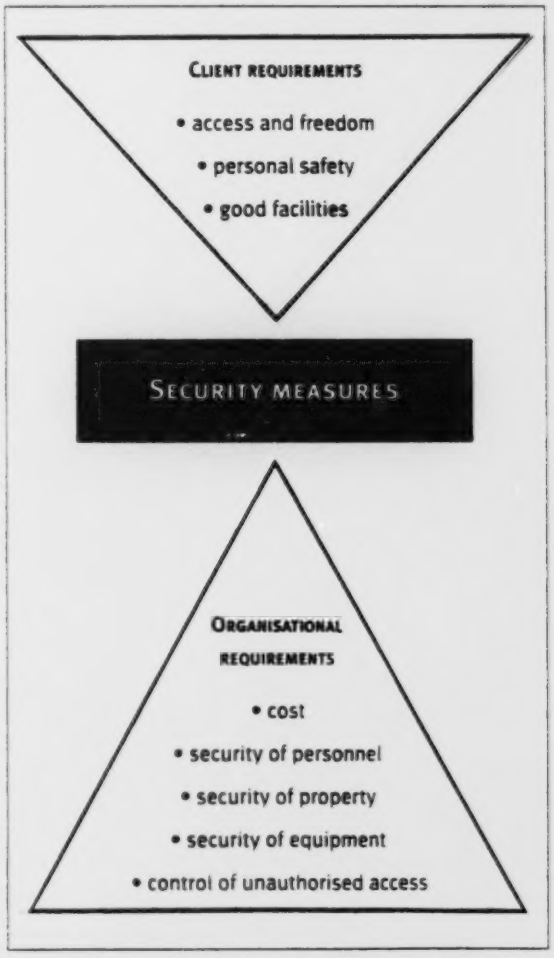

FIGURE 2: FRAMEWORK FOR DATA COLLECTION

and of experiences in other colleges. The students' perspective would be gained via a questionnaire and through interviews of small focus groups of Barking College students. A security question would also be included on the student satisfaction survey (issued annually) to gain a wider poll of student opinion (see Appendix 3).

Questionnaires were considered inappropriate for ascertaining staff perspectives, so less formal 'opportunistic interview' sessions were used to discover staff concerns. Where appropriate, the subject was brought up subtly within a working context.

The timetable for collecting data on these three aspects is given in Table 2.

Evaluating key methods

Policy research

Analysing a social problem to offer policy-makers ways to deal with it involves researching a course of action not yet put into practice. An indicator of the value of such research is its effect on social progress. However, it takes time before the true effects are known. This research focuses on measuring the level of importance colleges attach to security and on investigating possible solutions for their security issues. Future work could include looking at security from an economical, political, educational and country-wide geographic viewpoint.

Questionnaires

Survey results must be approached with the understanding that while they can reveal what is going on, where and when, they cannot answer why or reveal any causal relationships.

	Activity	Date
CLIENT REQUIREMENTS	Approach student union regarding security	February 1996
	Send out brief questionnaire to 50 students (at random in the refectory)	March 1996
	Hold focus groups (one with four students per group, and one with six students)	March 1996
	Include a question on security on the student satisfaction questionnaire	May 1996
	Interview 40 students about their feelings of security and on carrying weapons	May 1996
SECURITY MEASURES	Have discussions with the principal and the security manager to establish guidelines for the questionnaire	December 1995
	Pilot the questionnaire on the principal and security manager	February 1996
	Post the questionnaires to 225 principals in South East England (with SAEs) with closing date as 24 May 1996	April 1996
ORGANISATIONAL REQUIREMENTS	Meet with the principal and two senior managers	October 1995-May 1996
	Contact security/access control company	June 1996
	Contact six security firms	June 1996
	Have presentations and tenders by five security firms	June-July 1996

TABLE 2: TIMETABLE FOR RESEARCH

Although suitable for collecting facts and figures a questionnaire does not give an opportunity to gain opinion on, what is in this case, an emotive subject.

A guide offered by Anderson (1993) was used to construct the questionnaire to principals. He suggested the following approach:

- determine the research questions
- specify sub-questions
- draft the items
- sequence the items
- design the questionnaire
- pilot-test the questionnaire.

Specifying the sub-questions and piloting the questionnaire would be the most difficult part of the process. The sub-questions had to be structured to give a choice of options which would then determine which question was answered next. Ambiguity and leading questions had to be avoided.

One of the difficulties in testing the questionnaire was gaining access to principals already busy with paper work and similar requests. So, instead, it was shown to the principal and the security manager at Barking College; their recommendations led to minor alterations. The resulting questionnaire is given in Appendix 4. The questionnaire for students was less structured — see Appendix 5. It was tested on students in the student union office and no alterations were suggested.

Since no suitable computer software was available, the data was analysed manually, which was time-consuming. An optical mark reader system would have made analysis far easier.

Response rates to postal questionnaires are notoriously low but it was considered the only method of reaching so many principals in a short time span. Scott (1961) points out that non-respondents could distort results and that every effort must be made to ensure returns. However, due to cost and time available it was decided not to send out a reminder copy.

Focus groups

Focus groups can be used to pre-empt questions which should be included in a questionnaire or to probe more deeply than a questionnaire allows. Their main advantage over the standard interview is the further dimension offered by the synergy of a group response.

In this research, the focus group would be used to test how safe or insecure the students felt within the college and whether they thought that new security measures under consideration (those which would directly affect the student group) would restrict or enhance their college life. Each group should have a balanced composition in terms of opinion, age and gender; Anderson suggests between six and 12 members. When preparing questions for a focus group it is important to avoid asking 'why' a person feels a certain way about an issue — it is 'what' they feel that is important. One of the difficulties was keeping the group 'focus' on the internal issue rather than it extending to events which had recently taken place outside.

The differing dynamics of one group to another and the means of data collection make analysis extremely difficult. However, this would not pose too much of a problem in this research since the focus group was not the main source of data collection but was included to give additional scope to students wishing to express an opinion.

Dismissing ethnographic research

Staging an incident involving a breach of security to ascertain reaction and timescales was another method considered. Because of difficulties in deciding who should be forewarned, out of the principal, security manager, staff and students, and whether this would be a valid way to 'test' established security personnel, this method was not pursued. It could, however, be incorporated into future investigations.

3. Security in FE — emerging picture

What the principals say

The questionnaire sent to 225 college principals in the south east covered security issues relating to: staffing; costs; duties; future developments; budgets; priorities and details of incidents (see Appendix 4). A total of 109 full responses were received within the time limit. Results for questions with multiple answers are given in numbers, the rest are given as percentages.

The findings reveal that security is considered an important issue in FE colleges today. Only four of the colleges taking part in the survey said it was a low priority; while two of these have large intakes, one is mainly for part-time students and the other is a specialist agricultural college. More than half said security was a high priority in their college, and the remaining 40 per cent consider it a moderate priority.

The largest college replying had 12,000 full-time and 12,000 part-time students. The smallest had 300 full-time students and no part-time. A total of 20 colleges had no full-time students at all. Four of the principals gave no details on size of college. The remaining 78 per cent of respondents ranged from colleges with just 40 full-time students to the largest intake of 15,000 full-time students. Between them they were responsible for 233,207 students. The part-time intakes ranged from 10 at one college to 19,800 as the highest intake, with a total of 443,052 students between them; 12 per cent of respondents had no part-time students.

The amount spent on security differs immensely at these extremes of college size, but the type of incidents are almost identical, including unauthorised people on site, thefts and physical attacks on staff and students. It would have been useful to ask for the number of incidents experienced in each college.

Nearly 45 per cent of the colleges employ specialist security staff (see Table 3). The percentages show the proportion of colleges within that intake range which employ security staff.

When comparing the size of college against responses, to determine any correlation between the two, a more significant finding emerges: colleges with specialist staff have four times the number of full-time students than those not employing such staff. This could imply that the larger the intake of full-time students, the more likely they are to have security problems. However, the response to types of incidents experienced suggest that colleges of all sizes experience breaches of security. Taking the total number of students involved, what it does mean is that 80 per cent of full-timers are studying in colleges with security staff. This raises issues about the training of these staff and who should employ them: college or agency. It also means that part-time students have a fifty-fifty chance of attending a college with security staff. This could imply that colleges with more full-time students experience problems in sufficient numbers or of such severity that they are more likely to require specialist security help.

	College size by student intake	Employing security staff	Not employing security staff
FULL-TIME	10,000 plus	6 (100%)	N/A
	4,001-9,999	9 (100%)	N/A
	2,000-4,000	12 (71%)	5 (29%)
	1,000-1,999	14 (48%)	15 (52%)
	less than 1,000	4 (17%)	19 (83%)
	no full-time	2 (10%)	19 (90%)
	no student figures	1	3
	Total colleges	48	61
	Total students	189,425	43,782
PART-TIME	15,000-19,800	N/A	4 (100%)
	10,000-14,999	5 (45%)	6 (55%)
	5,000-9,999	15 (71%)	6 (29%)
	2,000-4,999	14 (50%)	14 (50%)
	1,000-1,999	3 (37%)	5 (63%)
	less than 1,000	4 (22%)	14 (78%)
	no part-time	6 (43%)	8 (57%)
	no figures given	1	4
	Total colleges	48	61
	Total students	210,189	232,863

TABLE 3: COLLEGES EMPLOYING SECURITY STAFF

Incidents of security breaches in FE

The findings on incidents of breaches of security confirm that FE colleges need to make security a high priority. All but three colleges taking part said they had experienced some type of security breach (see Figure 3). These incidents included vehicle theft (11), walk-in theft (9), muggings (4), robbery (1) and many unspecified thefts (81). Nearly half of these colleges had experienced break-ins and burglary (49 colleges). A total of 47 had had unauthorised persons on site and 46 had experienced vandalism, six of these incidents being vehicle damage, one a case of arson, and one a bomb scare.

Even more alarming was the extent of physical attacks taking place on college sites: 20 colleges reported incidents of violent behaviour. These included physical attacks (8), verbal aggression (6), internal fights (5) and attacks on clerical staff (1). Five reported incidents of drug dealing.

It came as a shock to discover that nearly one-third of the 109 colleges taking part have had staff attacked. These included being attacked while disturbing intruders, dealing with irate students or refusing entry, dealing with special needs students or irate parents, and being mugged. Figure 4 gives the details. Of the 32 colleges who have had staff attacked, nearly 40 per cent had no security system. No type of college appears to be immune to such attacks: included on the list of those experiencing attacks on staff were the largest college taking part and the smallest, with all sizes represented, and the majority of these had both full-time and part-time students.

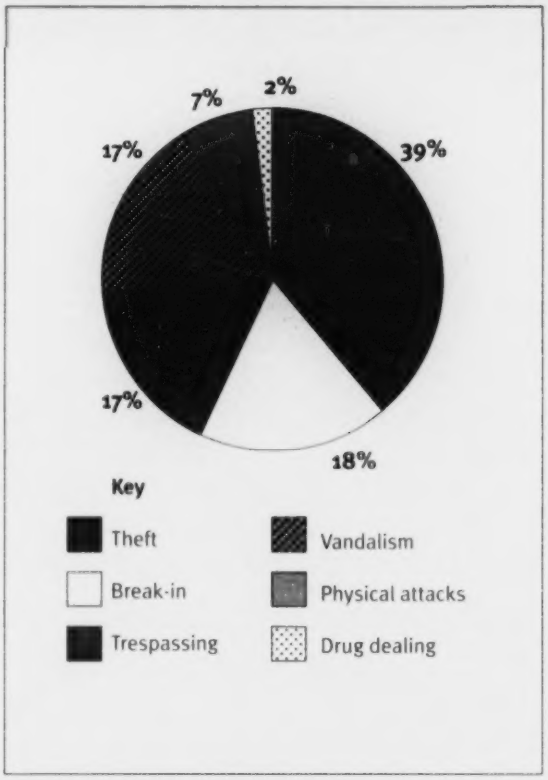

FIGURE 3: TYPES OF SECURITY BREACHES EXPERIENCED BY FE COLLEGES

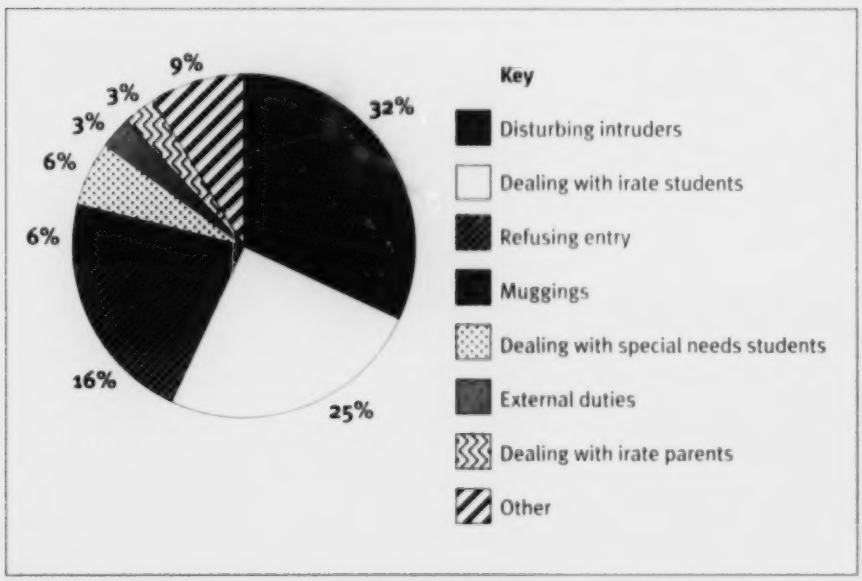

FIGURE 4: INCIDENTS OF ATTACKS ON COLLEGE STAFF

Another worrying statistic is that half of the colleges have had students attacked on college premises (Figure 5 gives the details). Almost half of these were internal student feuds (25 incidents), with a further six being internal racial feuds, and two being incidents relating to gender interaction. The other types of attack were:

- unauthorised persons on site (14)
- muggings (4)
- ex-students returning to site (2)
- racial intruders (1).

Nearly two-thirds of these attacks are internal, so would not have been prevented by limited or electronic access security systems. In these incidents, proper security guards might have been a deterrent. The remaining 39 per cent of attacks were by outsiders, so may have been avoided if methods of limiting access to non-students had been used. One member of staff with responsibility for client services reported a number of complaints from students about bullying: each time it is the fear of 'outside help' coming in that frightened them the most.

While there is no indication of the seriousness of each reported incident, it is still disturbing to discover that a quarter of these attacks were by unauthorised persons on site.

Colleges do not seem to be paying that much attention to the issue of internal attacks. When asked what additional security measures they expect to be using in five years' time out of guards, swipe cards and other electronic

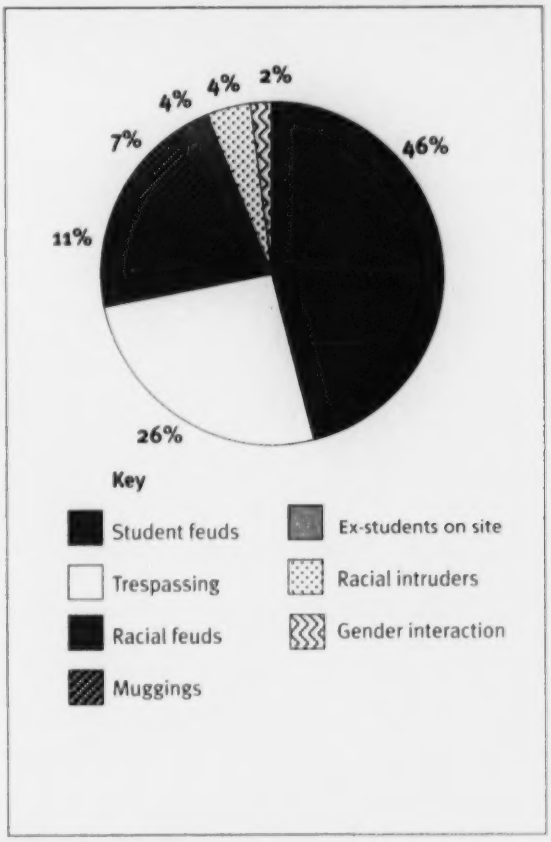

FIGURE 5: INCIDENTS OF ATTACKS ON STUDENTS ON COLLEGE PREMISES

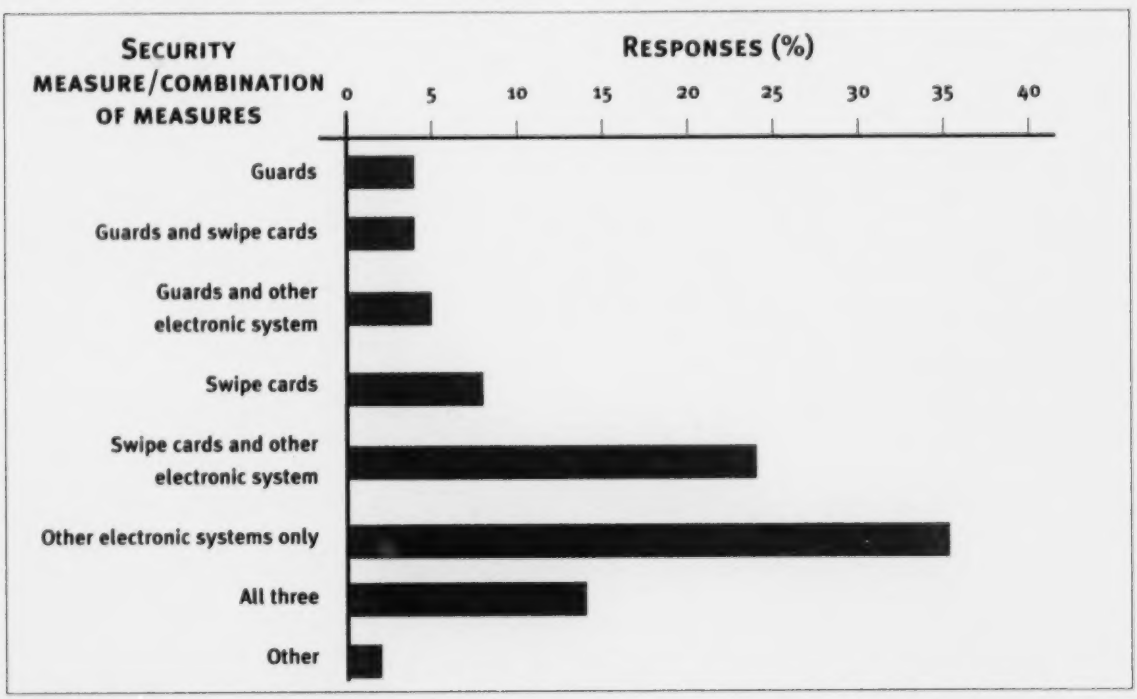

FIGURE 6: ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES COLLEGES EXPECT TO HAVE ADOPTED IN FIVE YEARS' TIME

Method	Operational responsibility	Cost	Effective		
			Yes	No	Partly
Swipe card:	Site service manager	NS			✔
	Head of school	20,000			✔
	Hall manager/assistant bursar	NS	✔		
	College superintendent	2,000 per location			
	Building services	NS	✔		
+ ID cards	Commissionaire	NS (part of 120K security budget)			
	Programme manager	3,000	✔		
for certain areas	College security officer	NS	✔		
only for student accommodation PRUX card	Caretaker/estates supervisor	2,000			✔
	Director of property and facilities	6,000	✔		
	Premises officer	15,000		New system	
only library and open access areas	Library staff	in-house			✔
	Location manager	6,000			✔
card-operated plus entrance turnstiles		Deputy principal and MIS manager		NS	✔
	Premises manager	2,500			✔
	Facilities manager	40,000			✔
for staff	Building premises manager	3,000	✔		
Swipe card, turnstiles and ID cards	Security manager	NS	✔		
	Safety and security manager	75,000+	✔		
Intercom system	Facilities manager/house manager	1,000	✔		
Security staff	Site manager	NS	✔		
External barriers	Staff	1,000	✔		
Intruder sensor alarm	Hall manager/assistant bursar	NS	✔		
Zone alarm	Senior maintenance officer	NS	✔		
ID card	Head of estate services	80,000			✔
Access control	Security staff and facility/house manager				
	Facilities manager	20,000	✔		
	Security manager	NS			✔
for students only	Building premises manager		✔		
	Student services	NS	✔		
	Estate manager	1,000	✔		
Coded locks	Senior warden	4,000			✔
	Head of security	100 each			✔
	Staff	1,000 each	✔		
	Staff	180/lock	✔		
Key locks	Centre manager	NS			✔
Key control	Caretaker	Varied	✔		
	Administration manager	100 pa running cost	✔		
Electronic lock	Receptionist/hair and beauty	300	✔		
	Facilities/house managers	200	✔		
	Estate manager	3,000	✔		
Key pad	All staff	N/K			✔
plus phased alarms	Caretaking staff	12/1600	✔		
	Office manager	120 each	✔		
	Administration manager	NS			✔
in selected rooms	Vice principal	1,000			✔

TABLE 4: METHODS OF RESTRICTING ACCESS TO SOME AREAS

systems, just four per cent named guards only as an additional measure, with 23 per cent naming them as a combined measure alongside either one or both of the other options. The electronic system figured most highly in the results (named in 82% of cases). Swipe cards were named either as a single or combined option by 48 of these respondents (see Figure 6).

Staff responsible for security

The number of staff employed at the 48 colleges with specialist people varied from one to 45, at a cost of between £10-£900K. Other duties given to these staff included helping with visitor care, removals, ID card maintenance and reception, acting as escorts, commissionaires, car parking assistants, traffic control and fire officers.

Nearly all of the participating colleges involve caretakers in security measures. Around half involve senior staff and less than 10 per cent have other staff involved. Only four per cent of those colleges expecting to spend on security within the next two years, anticipated buying in extra staff.

Types of system used

Two out of five colleges have methods of restricting access to some areas. Swipe cards were used by 14 colleges, and nine others used swipe cards with another system. Second in popularity and effectiveness was some form of electronic lock or key control, which was used by 15 colleges. Seven colleges used some type of ID card and access control system. Less than nine per cent used alarms or security guards for this purpose. However, colleges could be using alarms for purposes other than just restricting access, which was what this question asked.

Those who did restrict access in some way were asked who had operational responsibility for the system, how much it cost and whether they find it effective (see Table 4). Since colleges often use different titles for similar jobs, it is sometimes difficult to link like with like. However, most have a member of staff known as site-keeper, commissionaire, college security officer/manager, premises manager or estates manager. Some give operational responsibility for the system to caretaking staff, and in a couple of cases the deputy or vice principal carried out this function. In one college the library staff was responsible for a library-only

System	Respondents (in numbers)
Swipe card	8
Security cameras	8
Reduced number of entry points	3
Supervised access points and turnstiles	4
Electronic locks, key pads and key access	5
Other reduced access method	2
No method given	4
Swipe card and security camera	2
Swipe card and other system	7
Security cameras and other system	6

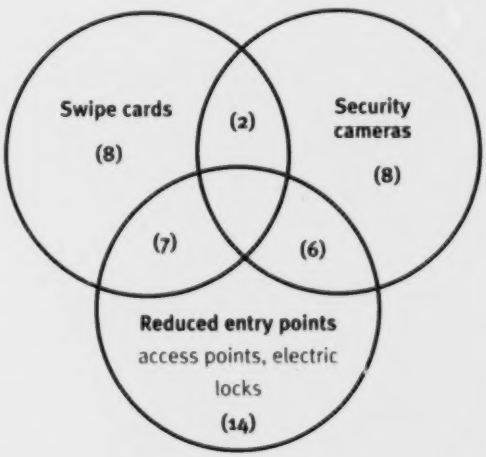

FIGURE 7: ALTERNATIVE OR ADDITIONAL METHODS OF SECURITY CONSIDERED

access area, and in another the MIS manager had responsibility. The cost of restricting access ranges from £200 for locks to £75,000 plus for a swipe card, turnstile and ID system. All but two said that the system was either completely effective or partially effective. The 67 colleges who said they had no method of restricting access to some areas were then asked if they had considered such a system: 64 per cent said yes and 31 per cent said no (three gave no response). Interestingly, more than 60 per cent of the colleges not considering a system had part-time students only.

Nearly half of all respondents said they are considering additional or alternative methods of security. The single most popular additional system considered was a means to reduce access points (14 respondents). Security cameras and swipe cards were the next preferred options, each specified by eight respondents. Others considered a combination of systems — Figure 7 gives the details.

Costs

Security emerged as a key funding issue for colleges taking part in this research: two-thirds said they envisaged major expenditure on security within the next two years.

Most of these 72 respondents (75 per cent) said that they expected the expenditure to be on an electronic system either on its own (20 respondents) or with another system, the most favoured, for one-third of these respondents, being a mechanical one. Six principals said they were expecting to spend on a camera system on its own and 16 were considering using cameras with another system. Figure 8 shows the results.

Alarmingly, less than 40 per cent of those colleges envisaging expenditure had allocated a budget for it. This ranged from £2K to £150K with an overall total between them of £801K, giving an average of £40K per college.

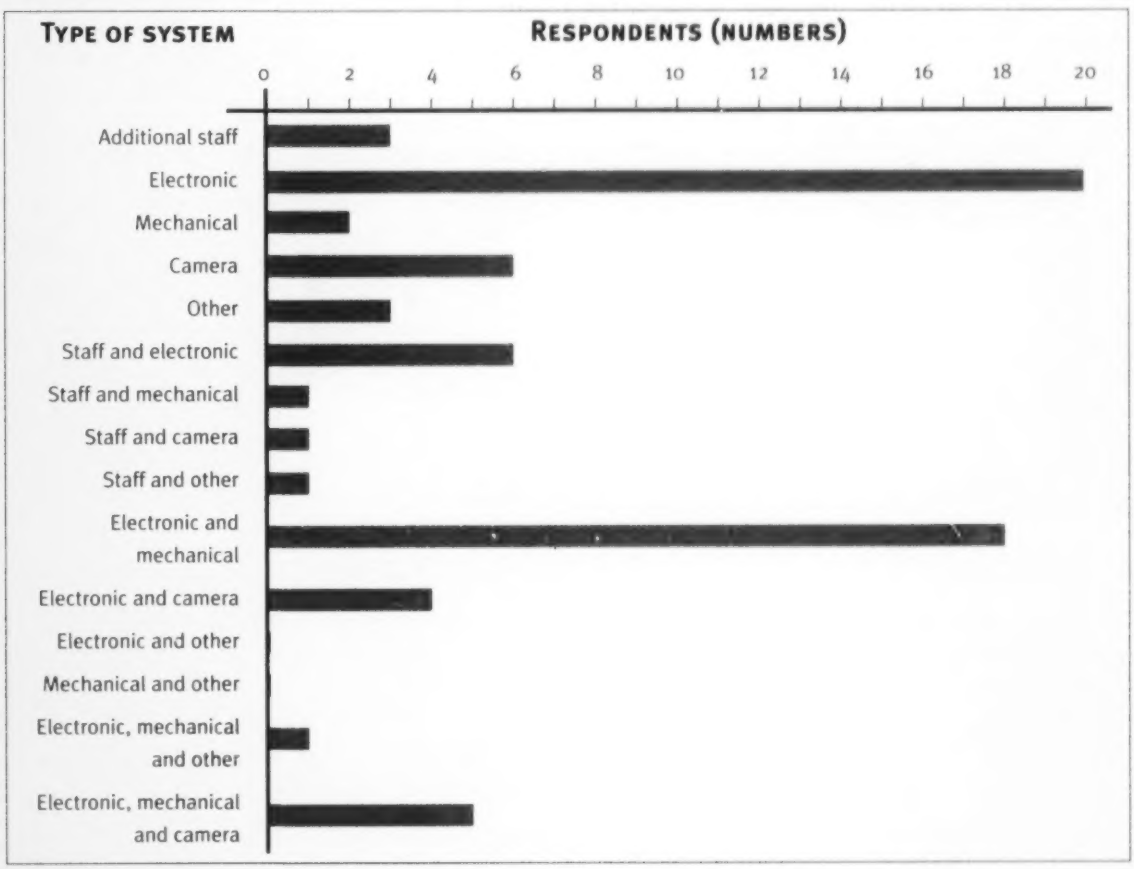

FIGURE 8: TYPES OF SECURITY SYSTEMS COLLEGES EXPECT TO BUY IN WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS

Situation at Barking College

Security: current and planned

Barking College's response to the questionnaire reveals that it considers security a high priority.

In line with most other colleges responding, it involves site keepers in security measures and has senior staff on duty at set hours during the day. It employs one part-time security staff on an evening/night-time basis. This guard has no other duties and costs approximately £30,000 per year through an agency.

Apart from key locks on some doors and key pad entry restriction for the finance area and staff rooms, there is no restricted access. Methods of restricting access have been considered, which is the same response as that given by 64 per cent of those colleges which do not have these systems at present.

Alternative methods considered are more CCTVs and the use of security guards. The college envisages future expenditure within the next two years on additional staffing, electronic controls and mechanical controls; again this response is in line with the majority of other colleges in the survey. Barking College has allocated a budget of £80,000 for this, which is double the average expenditure budgeted for by the responding colleges.

As with the other colleges in the survey, Barking has experienced a variety of types of theft: vehicle theft; walk-in theft and break-in theft. It has also experienced:

- trespassing (along with 47 other responding colleges)
- violence (along with 20 other responding colleges)
- drug dealing (along with five other responding colleges)
- drunks on site.

There have been no reported attacks on staff, which makes it one of the fortunate two out of three colleges in the survey which can say this. However, there have been attacks on students due to internal feuds and unauthorised persons coming on site to settle grievances or cause disturbances, which puts it alongside half of the colleges responding to the questionnaire.

Student perspective

The survey carried out among students at Barking College revealed that all felt at ease in the college. This involved more than 100 students: 50 completed the questionnaire (see Appendix 5); 40 were interviewed, and there were two focus groups.

Their opinion on swipe card systems was divided: half said they would not be happy to use swipe cards. Interestingly, all but one said they would welcome use of close circuit TV.

Only one student said yes to 'have you ever felt threatened in college'. None of those interviewed had ever been the victim of an act of violence or theft in the college.

Students were asked to suggest ways for ensuring a safer environment. Their responses included to be stricter on discipline, to introduce CCTV and to limit access to outsiders.

Finally, they were asked to give a word which describes the college atmosphere. Their responses included: tense; comfortable; calm; relaxed; dull, boring; sweet; friendly; nice; jolly; good. This would indicate that Barking College has managed to retain a welcoming atmosphere for the majority of those interviewed.

This is not, however, the whole story. There have been incidents where bullying or feuding has taken place. The victims of these incidents said that their greatest fear is how easy it would be for a whole army of the perpetrator's friends to descend on the college, which has happened in the past. One or two students have left the college rather than risk being attacked. This is evidence that lack of attention to security can affect recruitment and retention of students, which in turn can have an impact on funding.

Staff perspective

Impromptu interviews of a variety of staff revealed an atmosphere of confusion: staff do not always know what to do if they see an incident, and mentioned that incidents do not get 'followed up'. This indicated a lack of communication rather than a lack of action. Some staff feel vulnerable in certain places in the college — more from potential intruders than from the students.

Staff seemed far more worried about security than the students. A member of staff with responsibility for security said:

> *Nothing will be done until one of us is stabbed.*

He was particularly talking about large groups of non-students gathering in the car park or refectory for non-specific reasons who can take on a very threatening demeanour when asked to leave the premises.

3. Action plan for FE

Security is not optional! Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act (HMSO, 1974) requires that employees have a written health and safety policy statement; this includes dealing with foreseeable risks of violence to staff.

This research gives a timely and much awaited national overview of what colleges are doing about security. The responses suggest a possible geographical link with security concerns and this could be of interest for further study. The majority of responses came from the Greater London area — 59 responses from 119 contacted (approximately half); 13 responses from 21 approached came from Essex; in East Sussex 14 responded out of the 18 approached; from Kent seven responded from 23 approached, and from Surrey 10 responded from 23 approached; Appendix 6 gives the full details.

The overall picture emerging is that theft and vandalism of one type or another is experienced by all colleges. One-third of these colleges have had staff attacked and half have had students attacked. More than one-third of the attacks on students are connected with unauthorised persons on site, and the rest are internal attacks. A significant proportion of colleges have problems with violence.

As a result of this research, Barking College is faced with a dilemma which confronts many FE establishments. It is understandably reluctant to respond in a knee-jerk way to the question of access, and risk damaging its reputation as a warm, friendly college. Unfortunately, in the light of recent reported events where deaths of children and staff have occurred, no education establishment can afford complacency. Also, with the results of this survey revealing that attacks on site from intruders are a widespread occurrence in colleges, this is not an issue that the FE sector can hope will go away. FE colleges must strive to protect personnel and property and offer their students a safe environment in which to work. Security must also be considered in the context of what the community and neighbouring colleges are doing: as soon as they initiate tighter security measures the college which does nothing becomes an easy target.

There is also the question of repeat victimisation. The chances of repeat crime increases three-fold. If an easy opportunity was successful, the chances are it will happen again.

Full-time students in urban colleges appear to give rise to most security problems. However, this does not mean that all other types of colleges are immune: all should take action of some sort. Whatever measures are taken, no college or public building will be able to annihilate crime; what colleges must do is identify those people acting against their secure environment and decide how they can reduce their influence.

Visits, carried out as part of this research, to a number of colleges with varying degrees of security measures in place have shown that just throwing money at the problem is not the answer. If a college has no procedures in place to support its security measures, then it could be wasting thousands of pounds. For example, CCTV cameras in place with no procedures for monitoring are just a minor deterrent; to be truly effective they must be used to identify and track down offenders.

Key recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed for Barking College, but can be applied to FE colleges in general. Details of time-scale and cost are given, except in cases which require major financial investment by the college so will mean implementation in the longer-term.

The recommendations fall into three categories, those relating to:

- premises reorganisation
- procedures
- training.

Premises reorganisation

- Implement a proposal for the reorganisation of premises staff to identify clear responsibilities for security of the site, within a structured team approach.

Barking College has 15 buildings spread over a considerable area so needs a number of such staff working under the supervision of a team leader. Two daytime shifts each led by a shift leader with responsibility for all day-to-day site management — safety, security, cleaning and porterage — are proposed. Each of the three site zones will have a supervisor responsible for an area of the college, but working to the shift leader. At present, the college contracts out night-time, weekend and 'out of term-time' security, but with the planned installation of swipe card access controls is looking to use two daytime security guards from an external guarding company, one based in the site security office viewing CCTV monitors, and one on patrol.

time-scale — immediate
additional cost — as outlined below

- Carry out a feasibility report to identify and secure as many potential exits as safely possible. An intruder will require a fast means of escape — controlled vantage points will hinder this.

time-scale — 3 months
cost — neutral

- Install tighter security systems including a barrier for the car park.

time-scale — 6 months
cost — £10,000

- Give porters lodge a telephone link and control of the car barrier.

time-scale — 6 months
cost — minimal

- Issue car stickers so that student and staff cars can be identified.

time-scale — immediate
cost — minimal

- Install security lighting on the site, particularly in the car parking areas.

time-scale — 3 months
cost — £12,000

- Install a swipe card entry system:

  — in the short term to the library and IT rooms

time-scale — 3 months
cost — £15,000

  — in the long term to the whole site with a limited number of access points, built in to a complete site redesign including a new building to be the main reception and teaching area.

time-scale — future planning cycle
cost — £34,500 for a perimeter access terminal; £5m for new building

- Tender a contract for security guards with clearly defined duties.

time-scale — immediate
cost — £32,750/year

- Refine and upgrade CCTV cameras, including ensuring they are monitored by site security officers.

  The existing system was installed to meet insurer requirements, to monitor the perimeter fencing and rear of one of the blocks at night and during weekends. There is now a need for cameras which can pan, tilt and zoom-in to identify faces and vehicle registration numbers, and to have the system monitored during the day by security guards. Dome cameras were recommended since they are capable of covering the same area that would require four of the existing cameras. The existing external colour cameras would be relocated inside the building and replaced by black and white equipment outside to achieve better night-time definition.

time-scale — 6 months
cost — £25,000

- Ask premises staff to identify areas at risk — open access does not mean access to all areas all of the time.

time-scale — immediate
cost — neutral

- Invest in a dedicated radio system — at present the borough system is used which causes problems with use of airwaves being shared by other users and occasionally being closed down.

time-scale — 3 months
cost — £4,500 for base station plus £620 pa for licence

- Install panic alarms in key areas, such as the refectory, library, reception.

time-scale — immediate
cost — £4,000

- Build an atrium adjoining block to provide a covered area for students to sit — this removes the need for a common room and allows access points to be reduced.

time-scale — 6 months
cost — £200,000

Procedures

- Compile security procedures for managers, security guards, staff and site keepers, to be agreed by the senior management team and implemented. (Table 5 outlines specific procedures proposed for Barking College.)

time-scale — immediate
cost — neutral

- Ensure that the security and premises manager implements specific procedures to avoid internal theft by staff. These should include procedures to deal with:

  —staff entering or leaving premises outside normal working times

  —removal from site of equipment/tools

  —handling of keys outside normal working hours

  —follow-up procedures or monitoring time/place/duty rota at times of thefts

  Investigate using surveillance cameras with electronic beam for the storerooms.

time-scale — immediate
cost — neutral

- Establish a security action team reporting to the senior management team where interested parties, including students, may review progress of security actions.

time-scale — immediate
cost — neutral

- Implement a victim support scheme via the college counsellor.

time-scale — immediate
cost — neutral

- Communicate procedures to all staff.

time-scale — immediate
cost — neutral

- Monitor procedures regularly through the security action team and ensure that student and staff needs are regularly analysed and accounted for.

time-scale — immediate
cost — neutral

- Keep staff informed of incidents to avoid hearsay distorting actual events.

Training

- Ensure that all new staff are informed of security procedures during induction.
- Ensure shared ownership of security measures by training students in social responsibilities to other students and staff.
- Use own staff to train security guards so that they are aware of student needs and ensure a balance of liberty and security.
- Implement staff training at all levels on policy and procedures during faculty review days and make it compulsory.

time-scale for all training — 3 months
cost — neutral

Duty managers (all day cover including evenings)	Guards
• **To be contactable by site guards** • Act as first point of contact for all incidents • Give priority to any call regarding security • Take responsibility for all incidents • Deal with first step of disciplinary procedure including suspension • Must not leave the site • Ensure reception knows where they can be found • Keep a log book • Produce documentary evidence for distribution to relevant staff including the principal **Issues warranting suspension:** ➡ fighting ➡ stealing ➡ vandalism ➡ drug dealing ➡ taking drugs ➡ any other serious issues which contravene the code of conduct	• **Patrol whole college with particular attention to hot spots: refectory, car parks, reception, toilets** • Ensure students conform to code of conduct: Serious issues which require that the perpetrator be taken to the duty manager immediately: ➡ identify, intervene and report drug taking, bullying, fighting, theft and trespassing ➡ intervene if any act of vandalism is seen Non-serious issues which require reporting the student names to the duty manager (these could become serious if they continue after warnings): ➡ carry out random ID checks ➡ stop people smoking ➡ prevent loitering ➡ deal with illegal parking ➡ inspect, record and identify problems/faults with fire-fighting equipment ➡ ensure all fire exits and escape points are kept clear ➡ control the playing of loud music in the car park ➡ act as escorts when visitors are on site
Site keepers	**Staff**
• **Ensure all premises are locked up when not in use** • Ensure all classrooms are locked when not in use • Ensure no item of equipment leaves college premises without written consent by the director of faculty • Patrol buildings and car parks to identify, intervene and prevent: ➡ smoking in buildings ➡ thefts ➡ fights ➡ illegal parking ➡ trespass ➡ all fire equipment in good working order ➡ all fire exits and means of escape are kept clear • Assist in identifying and removing any suspended or expelled students and report to the senior site keeper	• **Ensure the general safety and security of personnel and property on the college premises** • Report acts of fighting, theft, vandalism, drug taking, and any acts of bad behaviour contrary to the student code of conduct • Ensure all rooms are locked and windows closed after use and keys returned to agreed location • Intervene when observing acts of violence, theft, vandalism, including minor offences such as smoking in buildings, dropping litter • Report any serious offences to the duty manager

Table 5: Security procedures proposed for personnel at Barking College

Messages for colleges

No security solution can be watertight, no matter how sophisticated and extensive the package of measures introduced. What colleges should aim for is to identify the risks and use this information to reduce the influence of people who act against their secure environment.

The measures suggested aim to maintain the friendly atmosphere of the college while reducing the opportunity for crime and the number of intruders who gain access to the premises. These measures should be communicated to staff and students in a positive way, driven by a pastoral not a policing approach.

All colleges should make it a priority to introduce measures which will make it far more difficult for anybody wishing to commit a crime on the premises, rather than waiting until they are in the position of having to react to an incident after the event.

Colleges should put pressure on the government and policymakers to urge that equal attention be given to security in further education as is being given to schools. Colleges owe it to their students and staff to ensure a safe working environment.

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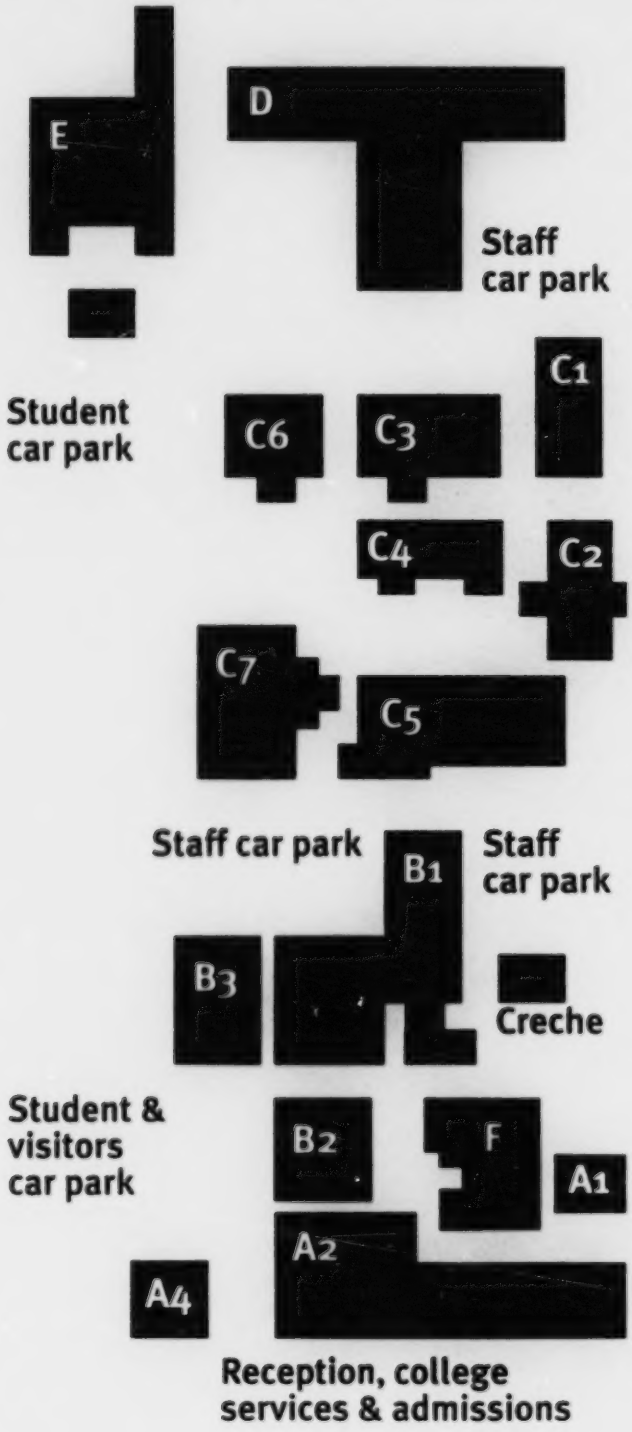
Appendix 1: Plan of Barking College site



Dagenham Road

Appendix 2: Principal's bulletin regarding security (January 1996)

SECURITY

Traditionally, Barking College has enjoyed a reputation as an open and friendly college. Students have valued the friendly atmosphere and the results of student questionnaires have continually reflected this theme. However, in recent months we have had a spate of ugly incidents that have threatened this environment and damaged our reputation. I am grateful to several key staff for their actions in preventing such incidents from worsening.

Last year's consultation exercise on security issues produced a limited response with staff reluctantly prepared to endorse techniques such as closed circuit television (CCTV), but uneasy about losing the college's open, accessible ethos. Since September 1995 we have had a recurrence of student and intruder problems. Widespread non-compliance with the non-smoking policy in the student refectory with evidence of cannabis smoking resulted in action spearheaded by Beattie Coe, Head of Client Services, to stamp out these problems in collaboration with refectory staff, premises staff and undercover police. This campaign has been overwhelmingly successful and I would like to thank all involved, especially Beattie. Unfortunately we have not yet achieved improved student behaviour outside of the college and I am now in the process of organising a meeting at the college with local residents, the police and, hopefully, local councillors and the Students' Union to devise a workable strategy.

Our CCTV was recently installed on a specification to protect property in the car parks and computer rooms. We put an additional camera in the rear of the student refectory but now need to upgrade our coverage in public areas such as A block, B block and D block foyers as well as the front of the refectory.

However, I am reluctantly being driven to the conclusion that we need swipe card access to the site. This will be expensive but can be combined with some improvements such as electronic student registration and computerised room timetabling. The above would need to be considered alongside the development of site accommodation.

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Appendix 3: Student satisfaction questionnaire (relevant sections)

6. What changes would you like to see to improve the atmosphere?	% Yes	% No
a) piped music	31	69
b) college radio station — more often	51	49
c) juke box — more music selection	65	35
d) lower ceiling in the main eating area	28	72
e) more areas for posters and information points	59	41
f) brighter paintwork etc	70	30
g) plants	58	42
h) low dividing partitions	41	59
i) MTV or other satellite TV screen	83	17
7. What security systems would you like to see operating?	**% Yes**	**% No**
a) close circuit TV	74	26
b) more visible security personnel within the refectory	59	41
c) compulsory ID badges worn by staff and students alike so that intruders can be identified	60	40
8. Evening students only	**% Yes**	**% No**
Are you satisfied with the arrangements at present for evening students?	56	40

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Appendix 4: Questionnaire to principals

May I thank you in advance for taking time to complete this questionnaire and assure you that all information received will be handled in strictest confidence.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify areas of concern and priority in further education colleges with regard to SECURITY.

I will be using statistics gained from this to assist in research for an MBA project to be completed this year. When using the word security I am including personal safety of staff and students as well as security of property.

Name: ..... Designation: .....

College: .....

1. Please indicate the approximate size of your college ..... ft students

   ..... pt students

2. Do you employ specialist security staff? ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

   If Yes please indicate — how many people .....

   — approximate staff costs .....

   — do they have other duties .....

   (please indicate type of duties)

   .....

   .....

   .....

3. Who carries out security duties: (please tick if appropriate)

   senior staff ☐

   middle managers ☐

   caretakers ☐

   others (please state) .....

4. Do you have any methods of restricting access to some areas eg swipe card system etc.

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

   If Yes please go to question 5.

   If No please go to question 6.

PTO

5. What is the method used? .....

   Who has operational responsibility? .....

   Approximately how much did it cost? .....

   Do you find it effective? ☐ Yes ☐ Partially ☐ No

6. Have you considered such a method? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   (only answer if answer to question 4 is No.)

7. Have you considered alternative methods? ☐ Yes ☐ No

   If yes, what methods? .....

8. What priority do you place on security at present?

   ☐ High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low

9. Do you envisage any major expenditure being allocated within the next two years on security?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. If Yes please indicate how much this is likely to cost and what form it will take.

    ☐ Additional staffing

    ☐ Electronic

    ☐ Mechanical

    ☐ Other (please elaborate)

11. Has a budget been allocated? ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If so, approximately how much? .....

12. What types of breaches of security have you experienced — if you could itemise perhaps the four most common or serious:

    1. .....

    2. .....

    3. .....

    4. .....

PTO

13. Have any of your staff been physically attacked on college premises?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes could you briefly describe who was attacked and what were the circumstances:

.....

.....

14. Have any of your students been physically attacked on college premises?

☐ Yes ☐ No If Yes could you briefly describe the circumstances:

.....

.....

15. In five years time what additional measures do you expect to be used in your college?

☐ Guards

☐ Swipe cards

☐ Other electronic systems

Many thanks for completing this questionnaire. Would you please return it in the enclosed reply paid envelope before 24th May 1996.

to:

Beattie Coe
Head of Client Services
Barking College
Dagenham Road
Romford
Essex RM7 0XU

Once again many thanks for your co-operation.

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Appendix 5: Questionnaire to students

SURVEY ON PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY AT BARKING COLLEGE

This survey is being carried out in order to assess perceptions on personal safety at Barking College.

1. Do you feel at ease in the college?
2. Would you be happy to use swipe cards and have limited access to some areas?
3. Do you welcome the use of close circuit TV?
4. Do you object to the use of close circuit TV?
5. Have you ever felt threatened in college?
6. Have you ever experienced a theft in college?
7. Have you ever been the victim of an act of violence in college?
8. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being unsafe and 10 being very safe) how would you rate this college?
9. What steps would you take to make this a safer environment?
10. Give me a word which describes the atmosphere here.

Many thanks for your help with my research.

Beattie Coe
Head of Client Services

Appendix 6: Map of geographical location of colleges responding to questionnaire

North Walsham
King's Lynn
Norfolk
Norwich
Great Yarmouth
Wisbech
Peterborough
Lowestoft
Cambridgeshire
Huntingdon
Milton
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
Bedford
Cambridge
Milton Keynes
Bedfordshire
Ipswich
Dunstable
Stevenage
Braintree
Colchester
Buckinghamshire
Luton
Ware
Essex
Aylesbury
Hertfordshire
Harlow
St Albans
Loughton
Chelmsford
Watford
Amersham
Basildon
Southend-on-Sea
Grays
Eastern region
colleges responding

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13. A real job with prospects: supported employment opportunities for adults with disabilities or learning difficulties
14. Transforming teaching: selecting and evaluating teaching strategies
15. Information and learning technology: a development handbook
16. Delivering modern apprenticeships
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